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BOOK REVIEWS.

RELIGION AND THE HIGHER LIFE. Talks to Students. By *William Rainey Harper*, President of the University of Chicago. Chicago: The University Press. 1904. Pp. ix, 184. Price, \$1.00.

Dr. William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago, is one of the strenuous men of the present generation. He is not only an exceedingly active administrator of the Chicago University but also a good teacher. In fact, in his specialty as Professor of Hebrew he has no superior and scarcely an equal among his colleagues. And here we have before us a book of his in which he shows the methods and tendencies of his influence upon the students entrusted to his care. It allows an insight into Harper the educator. Its sub-title "Talks to Students" indicates the spirit that characterises him as college president in his pastoral work.

Religion in President Harper's opinion is indispensable for obtaining the higher life. He says:

"Religion is not the mother of art, science, philosophy, and ethics. Religion is not to be identified with one or all of these. Religion is not the enemy of art, science, philosophy, or ethics. Religion is independent of these phases of the higher life, but closely akin—in fact, the oldest sister of the family. Religion is essential for the fullest development of these phases of the higher life. Religion must have certain characteristics to work in harmony with them."

President Harper speaks of religion in general, meaning those essential features which all religions have, or ought to have, in common, but the religion which he has first of all in mind is Christianity. He sees not the Christianity of any special church or sect, but Christianity in the broadest sense, which he calls "the religion of Jesus Christ":

"The religion of Jesus Christ is a religion capable of adjustment to any and every individual, however peculiar his temperament, however exacting his demands. Its simplicity, as the Master himself presented it, is marvellous. In its proper form it has always stood the most rigid tests; and it appeals as strongly to the reason as to the heart. It will permit you to respect your friend's religion; if he is a Jew, because it came out of Judaism;

if a sincere follower of Islam, because much of Islam came from it; if a disciple of some Eastern faith, because its founder, Jesus, was broad-minded and tender, and saw the truth wherever it existed, without reference to the name it bore. It is a religion of ideals, not weird and fanciful; but chastened, strong, and inspiring to true service. It is ethical in a sense peculiar to itself, for it is the religion of the Beatitudes and the Golden Rule. It is a religion that says: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"The greatest minds of nineteen centuries have found this religion helpful. I do not urge upon you any special *form* of this religion, for I have in mind its very essence, that which is common to all forms, that which makes it the power history shows it to have been through all these centuries. This, as found in the teaching of Jesus, is, in the words of old Hebrew philosophy, the fear of the Lord—i. e., belief in and acceptance of One who has power to help, even to the uttermost. This step, this position, this opening of the mind and heart to an influence of the highest spiritual character, will prove to be the beginning, and indeed, the chief part, of that higher life which lies before you, that higher life upon which you have already entered, and in which, we trust, your walk will continue, until there comes the next step forward—the step that will usher you into the life still higher, the highest life—the life beyond."

It will be of special interest to notice the position of President Harper with regard to the significance of the Bible and Biblical criticism in his pastoral work, for President Harper belongs to the higher critics, and we may even say that he is one of the boldest among them. It is a matter of course that he finds the Bible still indispensable, and he mentions the problems connected with Bible study among the difficulties that beset our path in trying to realise the higher life in religion. These difficulties to the scholar are mainly of a purely intellectual, not a moral or typically religious, nature and do not hinder the honest Christian from realising his ideals. President Harper says:

"These intellectual difficulties may continue to exist without being settled in *any* way, and still one's faith may remain unaffected. Faith in Jesus Christ and in the living principles of Christianity is not bound up or in any vital way connected with the outside intellectual difficulties which are all the while presenting themselves to us. You have your difficulties; some one else has other difficulties. The result should not and need not affect one's active Christian life."

Whichever way the intellectual difficulties may be settled, the great fundamental principles of the truth will remain standing as on a rock, and a good Christian will not have his confidence in them shaken. The Bible has

been and will forever remain a book that should be used for instruction and education, a book that will teach us the truth.

As to Biblical criticism, President Harper says:

"To be sure, I reserve the right for myself to decide that one book of the collection has more of religious truth in it than another. Who, for example, would deny that the nineteenth psalm was not more helpful than the first chapter of Chronicles? I reserve the right also whether this or that book is really to be taken as one of the collection. Luther exercised this privilege. Why should I not enjoy it also? I reserve the right, still further, to decide for myself in what way I shall interpret this passage or that. When I read:

'The mountains skipped like rams,
The little hills like lambs,'

I am at liberty to believe that it is poetry and not to be taken literally. So likewise when I read,

'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon,
And thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon!
And the sun stood still and the moon stayed,
Until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies,'

and see that it is poetry, as it is shown to be in the Revised Version, and that it is obviously quoted from that ancient collection of poetical pieces, the book of Jasher, I understand that I may believe the Bible, without believing at the same time that the sun and moon stood still."

"For relief from difficulties of every kind, whether of life or thought; for a help which may always be obtained; for a rock on which firm standing-ground may be gained—go to the Bible; not as to some talisman possessed of magic power, but as to a book containing story after story which tells of God's dealings with man; to a book containing precept upon precept, richer in truth than any other of the world's possessions—a book which will guide your thought unfailingly to the only source of wisdom, to the source of all wisdom—to God."

"Every Christian man should face this question: 'Is the Bible what I have supposed it to be? If so, it is for me to treat it differently, to make it the subject of systematic study, and, through acquaintance with it, to come closer to God; to know him better, and, having this knowledge, to realise, as I have not hitherto realised, my responsibility to my fellow-men.' No man need ever fear that he will attain too large a knowledge of these sacred books."

President Harper is a Christian but he believes in an American Christianity, the Christianity as it is developing in the United States. He concludes his book with this remark:

"Centuries will pass; and gradually humanity will come to recognise the

significance of love; gradually Jesus the Christ will come to reign in the hearts of men. In this work of educating humanity to understand God and itself, America is the training school for teachers."

A TREATISE ON COSMOLOGY. By *Herbert Nichols*. Vol. I. Introduction. Cambridge, Mass., 1904. 8vo. Pp. 455. [Copies can be purchased from the author, 219 Commonwealth Ave., Newton Centre, Mass. \$3.50.]

The first paragraph of Helmholtz's immortal memoir *Ueber die Erhaltung der Kraft*, declares that the proposition that perpetual motion is impossible and the proposition that all the phenomena of physics can be explained by (indeed he says "are due to") attractions and repulsions between pairs of particles, are "identical," meaning, of course, experimentally identical. But before many years had flown, it began to be clear to the minds of most of those who had examined the question that they were so far from being identical in the phenomena to which they would give rise, that the proposition about work was true, while the proposition about pairs of particles was false. It was certain phenomena of the elasticity of crystals which first brought this conviction to the few who were masters of that difficult subject. Next, those most significant of all chemical phenomena which are called the phenomena of the unsymmetrical carbon atom spread the wave of doubt to a wider circle. But what awakened physicists in general to the doubt was the difficulty of forming any adequate and purely mechanical or even hydrodynamical theory of electricity. The problem with which physical theorists were thus confronted goes by the name of the question of the constitution of matter, though the laws of motion are as much thrown into question as is the nature of ordinary matter. This question has been the chief subject of discussion in theoretical physics for many years. Some of the chief hypotheses which have been propounded for its solution have been the vortex theory, the electron theory, and Hertz's theory of concealed constraints. In the introductory volume of his *Treatise on Cosmology*, Dr. Herbert Nichols, who is already well known as a psychologist of high attainments in physics, and who here shows himself to be remarkably well-read in German philosophy, produces a new theory in competition with the three we have mentioned. The exposition of it occupies about a quarter of the volume. This theory, however, is not confined to matter, but is at once a theory of the constitution of matter and of the constitution of mind, having a thoroughly *monistic* character. It is based upon a philosophy which may fairly be described as a modification of Wundt's system, and thus gives a pretty fair idea of what that system would amount to when worked out into physical science. It is probably from that point of view that it will excite such interest as it may come to excite. This, however, is not the most interesting part of the volume.